

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 07047 310437Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 301130Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9804
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 7047

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AF
SUBJ: MORE AFGHAN CABINET CHANGES REFLECT CONTINUING POWER STRUGGLE

1. SUMMARY. FURTHER CHANGES IN THE AFGHAN CABINET REFLECT ONGOING
POLITICAL TURMOIL WITHIN THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT'S LEADERSHIP.
END SUMMARY.

2. ON AUG 28, RADIO AFGHANISTAN ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING NEW CHANGES
IN THE CABINET: DASTIGIR PANJSHIRI, FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO PUBLIC WORKS AS MINISTER OF THAT LESS
IMPORTANT MINISTRY; DR. ABDUL RASHID JALILI, RECTOR OF KABUL UNIVER-
SITY, HAS BEEN NAMED TO REPLACE PANJSHIRI AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION;
AND, SAHEB JAN SAHRAYEE, GOVERNOR OF KUNDA PROVINCE, HAS BEEN

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PAGE 02 KABUL 07047 310437Z

APPOINTED MINISTER OFFRONTIER AFFAIRS TO REPLACE NEZAMUDDIN TAHZEEB,
WHOSE ARREST HAS BEEN RUMORED FOR SEVERAL DAYS, BUT WHOSE WHEREABOUTS
ARE NOT KNOWN.

3. COMMENT: PANJSHIRI'S CHANGE OF PORTFOLIOS PROBABLY REPRESENTS
A DEMOTION, ALTHOUGH IN CONTRAST TO MANY OF HIS FORMER CABINET
COLLEAGUES, HE IS NOT YET IN JAIL, AND THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT STIL

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IDENTIFIED HIM AS A MEMBER OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA). OUR INFORMATION INDICATES THAT PANJSHIRI HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE PARCHAM WING OF THE PARTY DURING THE EARLIER YEARS OF THE AFGHAN LEFTIST MOVEMENT, BUT HAD SHIFTED HIS LOYALTIES TO THE KHALQ WING (LED BY THE CURRENT AFGHAN LEADER NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI) AT SOME POINT BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. FROM ALL INDICATIONS, HE, UP TO NOW, HAS BEEN A TRUSTED MEMBER OF THE INNER PARTY CIRCLES. HE APPEARS TO HAVE ATTRACTED A PERSONAL CIRCLE OF FOLLOWERS, WHICH MIGHT HAVE LED AMIN AND TARAKI TO REGARD HIM AS SOMEONE TO KEEP "OFF BALANCE".

4. THE NEW EDUCATION MINISTER, JALILI, HAS BEEN EDUCATED IN THE U.S. AND THE USSR, AND IS A KNOWN LONG-TIME MEMBER OF THE PARTY'S KHALQ WING. WE HAVE NO BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION YET ON SAHRAYEE, BUT WE PRESUME HE IS TRUSTED BY THIS REGIME.

5. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT TAHZEEB HAD BEEN A PARCHAMIST, AND MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVED THAT HIS REMOVAL FROM THE CABINET WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME. THUS, THE ACTIONS AGAINST PANJSHIRI AND TAHZEEB INDICATE THAT THE REGIME'S PURGE OF FORMER PARCHAMISTS (A CAMPAIGN HERALDED IN JUNE WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF MANY OF THAT FACTION'S LEADERS TO AMBASSADORSHIPS) CONTINUES TO UNFOLD, AND MAY EVENTUALLY ENCOMPASS ANYONE WHO HAS EVER HAD CONNECTIONS WITH THE PARCHAM, OR WHO IS VIEWED WITH THE SLIGHTEST SUSPICION BY THE PRESENT KHALQIST LEADERSHIP.

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PAGE 03 KABUL 07047 310437Z

6. IN THE BIGGER PICTURE, THESE CHANGES, SACKINGS, AND ARRESTS REFLECT THE CONTINUED POLITICAL TURMOIL WITHIN THE REGIME'S LEADERSHIP, AND UNDERScore THAT THE POOL OF TRUSTED MANPOWER ON WHOM TARAKI AND HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS CAN DRAW MAY BE SHRINKING AS EACH DAY PASSES.

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